

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application as presently amended is respectfully requested. Claims 21-28 are currently pending in this application, Claims 26-28 having been added by the present paper. Support for new Claims 26-28 is found in Figure 42 and related descriptions thereof. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

In response to the election requirement dated January 5, 2005, Applicants elect Species A, identified in the outstanding Official Action as corresponding to Figures 37-44, for further examination on the merits. Applicant identifies Claims 21-24 as readable on the elected species. Applicants reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected species.

Furthermore, while the Election Requirement asserts that the application contains claims to patentably distinct species, MPEP § 803 states the following:

If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

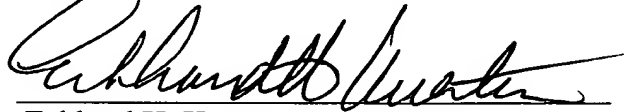
Although the outstanding Official Action does not identify search classifications, it is believed that the claims of the present application would have to be searched in a handful of sub-classes. Furthermore, since electronic searching is commonly performed, a search may be made of a large number of, or theoretically all, subclasses without substantial additional effort. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully traverse the Election Requirement on the grounds that a search and examination of the entire application would not place a *serious* burden on the Examiner, whereas it would be a serious burden on Applicants to prosecute and maintain separate applications.

Application No. 09/942,627
Reply to Office Action of January 5, 2005

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the requirement to elect a single species be withdrawn, and that a full examination on the merits of Claims 21-28 be conducted.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000

Fax: (703) 413 -2220

(OSMMN 06/04)

I:\ATTY\EHK\AMEND-RESPONSES\0039\21S\213384-ELECTIONAMENDMENT.DOC